

REPORT OF THE LIBRARIAN.

THE accessions of the last six months are one hundred and three books and two hundred and eighty-nine pamphlets derived from exchanges, four hundred and eighty-seven books and two thousand six hundred and fifteen pamphlets that are gifts; making an aggregate of five hundred and ninety books and two thousand nine hundred and four pamphlets. There have been received besides, one hundred and twenty-two maps, seven photographs, thirty-five engravings and lithographs, four charts, one coin, various manuscripts, and an extension table for service in the work-room. Another accession, a gift from Hon. George F. Hoar, consists of specimens of goloid currency, such as it has been proposed to issue from the United States mint, as intermediate between gold and silver.¹ The purchases since the last meeting of the society have been books for the Col. Davis Spanish-American alcove, to the amount of one hundred and fifty dollars, and fifteen volumes of Massachusetts local histories for the Judge Thomas alcove of such publications.

The books bid off by us at the late sale of portions of the Brinley library in New York can hardly be regarded

¹ The project laid before Congress to reconcile gold and silver by mixing them together in the same coin.

The report on metric coinage was made by Hon. A. H. Stephens from the Committee on Coinage, Weights and Measures, in June, 1879.

One of the coins presented by Mr. Hoar, of gold color, and called "One Stella," is valued at four dollars, or four hundred cents of the metric system.

The dollars, of which there are two specimens, were to consist of forty cents gold and sixty cents silver, the gold not being visible, the coin being about the color of silver. The mixture called goloid was patented by W. W. Hubbell of Philadelphia. The Committee in their report, say the dollar of this alloy coin metal is the first metric dollar of full standard intrinsic value struck in the world.

strictly as purchases. They are virtually gifts from the Brinley family, and, so far as we are concerned, the auction sale was merely a method of valuation. A list of them with the prices will be printed when the sales are concluded. It will be seen that we have thus been enabled to secure a class of costly rarities appropriate to our specialty, but such as we were not likely to obtain at our own expense. It is from this point of view only that the advantages of the opportunity can be fully appreciated. It is understood that two more sales are to take place as soon as the catalogues are prepared.

In point of interest and appropriateness the recent additions do not fall behind those of past periods of the same extent, and in some respects have a particular value and importance. In this general statement there is of course little opportunity for descriptive references, and the schedule of donations has to serve that purpose. It may not be amiss, however, to call attention to Mr. Hoar's liberal contribution of twenty select volumes and eight hundred and sixty-eight pamphlets, to the thirty-four rare books for Col. Davis' Spanish collection, from the sale of the Ramirez library in London, and to the manuscript deposits from Dr. Edward Jarvis, Hon. Charles Hudson, and Rev. Dr. Damon.

It has been the endeavor always, in our printed reports, to give as full a list, and as distinctive an account of accessions as the space required for the proceedings and papers would permit. Such full descriptions are not customary in the acknowledgments of other institutions; but they have been convenient to some who use these publications for reference, and, in the absence of card catalogues have in various ways been convenient to ourselves.

A change in the form of acknowledgment is suggested by the plan recently contemplated for the rapid production of a card register of the contents of the library, from which a concise bulletin of accessions may be readily printed.

It is believed that in ordinary libraries the catalogue should be an instrument for facilitating their own private operations, and not meant to be a generous contribution afforded with difficulty to the common stock of bibliographical literature. Rich institutions may expend large sums upon such costly publications; but to minor collections they are not important in proportion to the labor and expense of their preparation. Besides, there is great waste in the repetition of full titles for every catalogue that is printed, when they can be more cheaply referred to where they have already been recorded. An emphatic argument in favor of abridged titles for ordinary use is the diminished space for the eye to pass over in consultation. In most cases it is only needed to identify the book, and if more full and exact details of description are required, to seek them in the book itself, when possessed, or in bibliographical dictionaries or lists which are attainable at comparatively little cost. There is a method of securing the advantage of catalogues compiled for other libraries, by obtaining two or more copies and transferring from them, by the aid of scissors and paste, such titles as are required for the catalogues of humbler collections. In this process nimble fingers may take the place of scholarly toil and study in search of clear and compact expression, and the labor of numerous assistants may be made available at once. It is not claimed that the higher forms of catalogue-making can thus be produced, but one sufficient for practical purposes, at a moderate expenditure of time and money. We are happy in being able to announce that the means of providing this important facility for the operations of the library have been assured by a liberal and active member of its government, who had already taken steps to have an index to the society's proceedings put under way for completion.

Our library is passing pretty rapidly from the simply conservative condition common to associations formed for literary and scientific objects, and more or less private and

exclusive in their character, to the public position of a free resort for special studies and classes of technical information, that are daily becoming more popular, pervading as they do many of the most interesting subjects of investigation now largely engaging public attention. A broader and more liberal scale of management, demanding larger expenditures, and consequently larger means, must be expected to follow an expansion of public service. There is no help for this if the institution is true to its purposes, and always ready to meet the demands likely to be made upon it.

It had been proposed to dwell somewhat on the present condition of the library and the library building, their general arrangement and method of organization, to be accompanied by a plan of the interior of the edifice, for the advantage of members at a distance; but the untimely illness of the librarian has interfered with this intention. What has been recently accomplished is an enlargement of the structure, and a provision for warming all its apartments by steam; so that not only are all the rooms cheerful and well lighted but are kept at a comfortable and wholesome temperature during the year. Thus in the lower portion of the building we have, wholly above ground, three useful lobbies, and a spacious apartment, lighted on two sides, for assortment, and the storage of unassorted materials, which has heretofore been found of indispensable convenience with the single drawback of an imperfect distribution of warmth. We have now fitted up on the same floor, in the recent addition, an inviting accommodation for our five thousand bound newspapers; with great facilities of access and use.

The series of rooms above contain the offices, and the alcoves and galleries of the library proper. Here an important improvement has been introduced by Mr. Salisbury, Jr., for the greater security of our treasures. The plan is entirely successful. A view of the books on their shelves is not obscured by the high open-work barrier that protects them, while easy approach is afforded to every part by inte-

rior passages running through the circuit of alcoves around the central areas, and by the galleries, to which casual visitors are not admitted, but which are readily seen from below. Happily it has been so strongly impressed upon the mind of our active associate, that to *preserve* is no less a duty than to collect, as to induce the devotion of a good deal of time and money on his part to that end, for whose accomplishment there were many objections and obstacles to be overcome. The burglar-proof steel safe furnished by our President completes our provision for security from depre- dation.

We have heretofore claimed that our books and pamphlets were so placed that whatever we possessed could be found by ourselves with little trouble or delay. The proposed alcove lists will now enable strangers to determine without admission to the shelves, what publications they would like to examine, which is all they can reasonably expect.

The number of volumes now constituting the collection is estimated to be a little over seventy-five thousand, reckon- ing ten unbound pamphlets as a book, and adding to the last actual count the permanent accessions received since.

The alcoves of the upper rooms are two stories in height, divided by platforms for galleries, and with a long window in each of the entire altitude of both stories. The books are reached by hand without the aid of steps or ladders, and the railed centre opening, left for the passage of light, has movable covers that serve as tables. The number of double alcoves is twenty-two, some of which have been assigned to private donors, and the present arrangement of their contents is as follows:—

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| A. Bound Pamphlets, and State Documents. | E. (A large corner alcove.) N. Y. State Documents, Bibles and Theology. |
| B. Miscellaneous Books. | F, G, H and I. Periodicals. |
| C. The Col. Davis Works relating to Spanish America. | K. State Histories and Direc- tories. |
| D. The Mather Library. | L. The B. F. Thomas Alcove of Local History. |

Alcove M. Biography.	S. The Bentley Collection.
N. Rebellion and Slavery.	T. Miscellaneous.
O. Miscellaneous.	U. Worcester County Ath-
P. Massachusetts State Docu- ments.	næum Collection, and In-
Q. Learned Societies.	sane Asylum Reports.
R. U. S. Public Documents.	V and W. Miscellaneous.

Our building is not fire-proof. I do not know one that is. In its present condition and method of use, however, it is very little exposed to conflagration from without or within; the causes of such a calamity being reduced almost to a minimum, while the facilities for prompt detection, and ready access for extinguishment, are remarkably favorable.

The number of home members of the society is small. There are but thirty-one in Worcester, and these in most cases busily occupied by their private affairs. It is desirable that associates and friends at a distance should understand that the central body are not inattentive to their responsibilities, or sparing of personal effort to carry out the design of the institution; while the executive authorities are endeavoring to make the most of resources that are from time to time supplied by themselves or other private generosity.

The Librarian in his last report called attention to the manuscript note-book of Thomas Lechford, which had been placed at the disposal of the society for printing. Since then it has been copied, at an expense of one hundred dollars, and is now waiting examination by our associate, Dr. J. H. Trumbull, after which it will be printed under the editorial supervision of Judge Dwight Foster, who assumes the expense of preparation and publication.

There are two points which it is proper to recognize in our reference to the present condition and position of this institution.

In what may properly enough be denominated the renaissance of practical interest and inquiry relating to Mexican and Central American archæology, Mr. Stephen Salisbury,

Jr. had his attention drawn early to the subject by the circumstance of passing some years ago a winter with a class-mate in Yucatan, and extending an acquaintance among Spanish gentlemen and scholars in Mérida, where his friend resided. The interest thus early created he did not fail to follow up and enlarge when and where opportunity offered. The result has been his correspondence with Dr. and Mrs. Le Plongeon, and the receipt of relics and photographs from them which, with additions from his other collections, are constituting a very valuable and instructive cabinet of antiquities.

This has been quietly but efficiently organized, and is a prominent feature of our recent arrangements. Intimately connected with it has been the effort to introduce into the published proceedings of the society letters and essays supposed to illustrate the subject. These papers, with those of Valentini and Bandelier, as brought out under Mr. Salisbury's care, and very much at his expense, are attracting daily increasing attention; and it is pleasant to know that our society has thus early and thus effectively been at active service in the present important movements for the development of American archæology. It is trusted that the means of publication may continue in some way to be sufficiently provided.

The other incident which is thought worthy of mention is the authoritative announcement by Huxley of the scientific conclusion that this country is the true field of research into the primitive condition of the human race, and other original forms of animal, vegetable and geological existence.

In speaking of the "Coming of Age of the Origin of Species," on the first day of the present October, Huxley says, "*The fossil fauna of the Western Territories of America bids fair to exceed in interest and importance all other Tertiary Deposits put together.*"¹

By reference to the Reports and Proceedings of our society that opinion, it will be seen, was advanced by us not less

¹ A lecture delivered at the Royal Institution, Friday, March 19, 1880.

than twenty-five years ago,¹ and that its confirmation and illustration have been the work of all government explorations since.

Our President is called upon to take a wider outlook among scientific operations and scientific men abroad, and does not fail to meet the varied requisitions that are made on his attention and consideration.

S. F. HAVEN.

¹Archæology of the United States by S. F. H., Smithsonian Contributions to Knowledge, Washington, 1855. Proceedings of American Antiquarian Society, Oct. 21, 1867. Report of the Council, Oct. 21, 1870. Report of the Librarian, April 25, 1871.

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